war. Such an analysis would have provided even greater nuance to the regional context in which al-Nahda and Tunisia are situated.

The Politicisation of Islam also fails to treat systematically the situation of women in Tunisia. As many have observed, the politics of gender in Tunisia is a highly charged issue, especially with regard to the Islamism. Hamdi makes only passing reference, however, to the sharply contested issues associated with the political and social rights granted to women in Tunisia. Hamdi discusses the sharp confrontations between Bourguiba and the then Harakat al-Ittijah al-Islami (Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique, MTI), but he barely discusses the Personal Status Code that has been at center stage in the disputes. The book mentions, in a couple of instances, that al-Nahda has accepted the Personal Status Code in the 1990s out of political pragmatism. Still, a more systematic treatment would have been valuable.

Finally, the book suffers from some lapses of presentation. The most notable shortcoming, and in all likelihood not the author's fault, is the fact that the index is incomplete, stopping with *s*. Some chapters have italicized titles in footnotes; others do not.

These few shortcomings notwithstanding, *The Politicisation of Islam* is an important, valuable book. It will serve as a useful, essential complement to the works cited earlier, as well as the writings of John Esposito, Lisa Anderson, James Piscatori, and others. Hamdi has provided the empirical grounding for broader, theoretical work, and he has done so from the unique perspective of a former participant in an Islamist movement. The book should be particularly useful in advanced undergraduate and graduate-school courses on the politics and history of the MENA, as well as on the politics of religion. It should also be of interest to researchers and policy-makers interested in Tunisia and, as the title suggests, in the intricate entanglements of religion and politics.

MOHAMMAD HASHIM KAMALI, *Freedom of Expression in Islam* (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1994). Pp. 349.

REVIEWED BY SHERMAN A. JACKSON, Department of Near Eastern Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

The main objective of this book is to show that Islam promotes "the vindication of the truth and the protection of human dignity" by guaranteeing the right to freedom of expression. "Freedom of expression," however, encompasses a broad range of matters, from freedom to criticize the government (*ḥaqq al-muᶜâradah*) to freedom of religion and conscience (*ḥurrîyah al-dînîyah*). Similarly, these freedoms are not absolute but are tempered by both moral and legal constraints. The overall scheme of the book is thus to catalogue these rights alongside these constraints so that a realistic picture of the nature and scope of freedom of expression in Islam emerges.

The book is divided into four main parts. Part 1, "Preliminary," lays out the overall scope of the work. Here, however, Kamali also discusses (briefly) the concepts of "rights," and "fundamental rights." Against the notion (put forth by Schacht, Gibb, and others) that Islam is essentially a system of duties, he argues that rights are equally central to Islam, and that this has only been obscured by the jurists' legalistic approach, which tended to look for and explicate duties rather than rights. This, however, should be taken to reflect a particular approach to rights rather than a denial of them. Of the many rights recognized by Islam, some are "founded on clear injunctions and primary principles of the Qurᵓân and Sunnah" (p. 21). These Kamali identifies as "fundamentalist rights," some of which include the rights to life, property, privacy, movement, justice, personal dignity, and equality before the law.

Part 2, "Affirmative Evidence," goes on to catalogue the various rights and even duties to express oneself in Islam. These include commanding the good and forbidding evil (identified

as *ḥisbah*); sincere advice (*naṣîḥah*); consultation (*shûrâ*); "personal reasoning" (*ijtihâd*); freedom to criticize (*ḥurrîyat al-muᶜâradah*); freedom to express an opinion (*ḥurrîyat al-raᵓy*); freedom of association; and freedom of religion (*al-ḥurrîyat al-dînîyah*). All of these are supported by what Kamali presents as evidence from the Qurᵓan and hadith, along with the views of various jurists. (Qurᵓanic verses and hadith are given in Arabic script and translation throughout the book.)

Part 3, "Moral Restraints," discusses religious values and prohibitions that operate as limits on freedom of expression by discouraging its abuse or irresponsible use. These include prescriptions such as the ban on backbiting (*ghîbah*), defamation, derision, exposing the weaknesses of others, excessive questioning, capricious opinion (*hawâ*), "pernicious innovation" (*bidᶜah*), biased criticism (*baghy*), and dissension (*ikhtilâf*). Under the heading "Special Subjects," theological issues such as the essence of God and free will and predestination are listed as topics that should be avoided because of their tendency to promote schism. Scriptural condemnations of "acrimonious contention" (*mirâ*), "disputation" (*jadal*), and "argumentation" (*khuṣûmah*) are also cited.

Part 4, "Legal Restraints," discusses limits on freedom of expression that are backed by prescribed (*ḥadd*) and discretionary (*taᶜzîr*) punishments—for example, slanderous accusation (*qadhaf*), attribution of disbelief to a Muslim (*takfîr*), sedition (*fitnah*), blasphemy (*sabb Allâh wa sabb al-rasûl*), heresy (*zandaqah*), and apostasy (*riddah*). The book ends with an appendix of five excurses, including discussions on *ḥaqq* (rights), *bidᶜah*, and the Salman Rushdie affair.

This book is a bold attempt to present its topic in terms that will appeal to a modern mindset. This, however, is the source of a number of weaknesses. The first, and perhaps most glaring, is the omission of a general discussion on the constraints on state power, such that one would gain a real sense of the extent to which freedom of expression is a viable right in Islam. It is, after all, one thing to have a right; it is quite another for the price of exercising it to be so high that one feels that one is better off forgoing it.

Second, it appears that a number of modern phrases are simply translated into Arabic (e.g., *ḥurrîyat al-muᶜâradah*) and then arbitrarily rendered as technical terms, as if they represented long-standing Islamic institutions. Other modern concepts (e.g., freedom of association) are brought over in English, with no Arabic parallel. (One wonders, incidentally, whether a discussion of the *madhhab* might not have proved helpful here.) Similarly, the Islamic legal tradition is invoked to support the idea that the many freedoms Kamali cities have always been recognized in Islam. But the sources he relies on tend to detract from this claim. For example, none of the standard manuals of "*madhhab-fiqh*" (e.g., *al-Hidâyah*, *Mukhtaṣar Khalîl*, *al-Rawḍ al-murbiᶜ*, *al-Muhadhdhab*) or their commentaries are cited in the discussion. In fact, frequent resort is made to figures such as Ibn Hazm, Ibn Taymiyah, and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyah—men who, though important in their own right, can hardly be said to represent tradition's dominant opinion. On other occasions, when even these scholars will not support the view he wants to present, Kamali resorts to his own or some other modern scholar's interpretation, or re-interpretation, of the Qurᵓan and sunna. In most cases, the substance of these conclusions is convincing (especially Kamali's own views on apostasy, heresy, and blasphemy). But this vacillation, along with his choice of sources and jurists, raises questions about how much currency some of the views in this book could have enjoyed among the majority of Muslims over the centuries.

In many ways, this book is a handsome reflection of one of the major problems confronting modern Muslims—namely, the crisis of authority, or the lack of viable and recognized mechanisms with which to validate their own views. Modern *ijtihâd* may be viable, but it is not fully recognized. Tradition may be recognized, but it does not always (certainly not easily) provide viable solutions. Modern writers are thus forced into a plainly ambivalent relationship with both tradition and *ijtihâd*. And their works often take on the dual appearance of

being both primary and secondary sources. Readers will no doubt detect this characteristic in Kamali's work.

At the same time, there is a real sense in which the development of Islamic law has often amounted to a matter of time catching up with ideas: it is not always the source or the substance of an idea, but rather its sheer tenaciousness and its being discovered under the right circumstances, that validates it over time. Today's innovation, in other words, can become tomorrow's precedent. And it is here, perhaps, that the real importance of Kamali's work resides. For his "innovations" are always thoughtful and, more often than not, convincing. Many of his ideas will undoubtedly prove appealing to modern Muslims (and many non-Muslims). In the end, this may provide them with enough fortitude to stand the test of time. For this very possibility itself, Kamali deserves to be congratulated. Anyone interested in the subject would do well to consult this work. Indeed, its methodological shortcomings notwithstanding, *Freedom of Expression in Islam* will almost certainly inform all future discussion of its theme.

ROBERT G. HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam*, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam, 13 (Princeton, N.J.: Darwin Press, 1997). Pp. 890. $49.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL G. MORONY, University of California, Los Angeles

What did non-Muslims in western Asia think was happening in the 7th and 8th centuries? How did they describe it? How reliable are their descriptions? Hoyland's main purpose is to evaluate the usefulness of non-Muslim evidence for matters concerning early Islamic history. He notes that (at least outside of Arabia) non-Muslim sources represent the majority of the population in early Islamic times. His argument that the different reactions to Islam among Christians reflects differences in their own perceptions and intentions could apply equally to Jews and Zoroastrians.

Hoyland identifies virtually every relevant text, providing appropriate text criticism and discussions of textual history and editions, and liberal quotations of passages referring to Islam. At the very least, this makes his work a useful reference tool, but it is much more than that. The texts are divided conceptually into two groups. The first contains incidental references to Islam in Greek, West Syrian, Armenian, East Syrian, Latin, Jewish, Persian, and Chinese sources. On the Persian sources, one should also now consult Choksy, *Conflict and Cooperation* (New York, 1997). The second group consists of deliberate references to Islam in apocalypses and visions (including Muslim Arabic texts; again one should consult Choksy on Zoroastrian apocalypses), martyrologies, chronicles and histories, and apologies and disputations.

Having identified and presented the texts, Hoyland then synthesizes non-Muslims conceptions of Islam. While some saw Muslims as a punishment sent by God for their collective sins or the sins of the emperor, Jews saw Muslims as an instrument of God's deliverance. Muslims were also seen as primitive monotheists. However, the view of Islam as worldly that occurs in martyrologies written by ascetics should be related to the larger issue of asceticism, which was given new meaning by the worldly success of Islam and was also an issue among early Muslims. Although the non-veneration of images and worship toward the south appear to be new issues, Hoyland's point that Christians recycled old arguments against Judaism and used them against Islam should be extended to include Zoroastrians, who recycled old arguments against monotheism.

This is followed by a chapter that demonstrates what an empirical approach to using non-Muslim sources can yield. The opening section deals with Islam in 7th-century non-Muslim sources. From these one can learn that there was a new system of dating and a new ruling elite